

Application No. 10/758,202
Amendment dated November 22, 2005
Reply to Office Action of May 23, 2005

Docket No. 0051-0218P
Art Unit: 3654
Page 7 of 13

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Two (2) sheets of replacement drawings are attached hereto in order to properly label sorting and ejection part 12 and inspection unit 31 in FIG. 2, and to properly show clamp bar 35 and slide groove 35a in FIGS. 11, 12(a), and 12 (b). The two sheets of replacement drawings attached hereto replace Figs. 2, 11, 12(a) and 12(b) as originally filed.

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-14 are pending. Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, and 12 are amended. Claim 1 is independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Examiner Interview

The Applicants gratefully appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiners Matthews and Matecki during the interview conducted on November 10, 2005 with the Applicants' Representative, Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786.

During the interview, the Applicants' Representative presented and discussed proposed specific changes to independent claim 1 to overcome the Examiner's rejection of claim 1 based on Garcia et al. FIGS. 7-9, and column 3, lines 45-47, column 4, line 47, and column 5, lines 35-40, as cited in the Office Action in the rejection of claims 1.

As best understood by the Applicants' Representative, the Examiners verbally agreed that independent claim 1, including the proposed amendments discussed during the interview, is NOT taught or suggested by any of these passages of Garcia et al. cited in the Office Action.

The Examiners then referred to Garcia et al. FIG. 16, and tried to make the point that pivot frame 60 which rotates about pin 62 may possibly suggest the "clamp bar which is slid along a slide groove disposed on the base", as set forth in independent claim 1, as amended

to include the proposed changes discussed during the interview. As argued, below, the Applicants respectfully submit that FIG. 16 fails to provide such a teaching or suggestion.

Accordingly, this Amendment formally amends independent claim 1 to include the specific changes to independent claim 1 that were proposed to and discussed with the Examiners during the interview on November 10, 2005.

Also, in the interview, the Examiners pointed out that they believed that FIGS 11, 12(a), and 12(b), as originally filed, do not clearly show clamp bar 35 and slide groove 35a. In particular, the Examiners alleged that in the drawings, elements 35 and 35a appear to have the same length, and thus it is hard to tell how clamp bar 35 can slide in slide groove 35a. In response to this objection, revised FIGS. 11, 12(a), and 12 (b) are attached hereto to properly show clamp bar 35 and slide groove 35a, and their relationship to one another.

If further issues or questions arise during the consideration of this response, the Examiners are encouraged to contact the Applicants Representative, Carl T. Thomsen, at 707-208-4030 who is available to clarify any open issues that may remain.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has not acknowledged the Applicants' claim for foreign priority based on Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-11060. Clarification is requested in the next official communication.

Amendments To The Drawings

Two sheets of replacement drawings are attached hereto in order to properly label sorting and ejection part 12 and inspection unit 31 in FIG. 2, and to properly show clamp bar 35 and slide groove 35a in FIGS. 11, 12(a), and 12 (b). No new matter has been entered.

As is apparent from replacement FIGS. 11, 12(a) and 12(b) the slide groove 35a is longer than the clamp bar 35, and therefore the clamp bar 35 can securely slide in the slide groove when the eccentric cam 34 is rotated.

Claim Objections

In response to the Examiner's objection to claims 7 and 8, the Applicants have amended claims 7 and 8 to address the issues pointed out by the Examiner.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and § 103(a)

Claims 1-6, 10, 11, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Garcia et al. (U.S. 5,842,579);

Claims 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garcia et al. in view of Scholten et al. (U.S. 3,097,743); and

Claims 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garcia et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

Amendments to Independent Claim 1

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a work inspection system, including *inter alia*

wherein the work inspection apparatus has a pair of probes being capable of contacting the works in the work-storing pockets from the front and rear surfaces of the conveyor table, and

wherein the probe on the rear surface side of the conveyor table is held in place by a clamp bar which is slid along a slide groove disposed on the base.

As is apparent from revised FIGS. 11, 12(a) and 12(b) the slide groove 35a is longer than the clamp bar 35, and therefore the clamp bar 35 can securely slide in the slide groove when the eccentric cam 34 is rotated.

By contrast, as can be seen in Garcia et al. FIG. 8, this document fails to suggest a slide bar which is slid along a slide groove of the base. In the Office Action, the Examiner refers to clamp bar 31 in FIG. 8 which is merely bolted to contactor module body member 29 on the front side (rather than a rear surface side) of the conveyor table 7. The Applicants respectfully submit that Garcia et al. FIG. 8 fails to teach a slide groove on a base or on any other element. Further, the Applicants respectfully submit that Garcia et al. FIG. 8 fails to teach a clamp bar 31 slides with respect to body member 29, or with respect to any other element.

In the interview, the Examiners referred to pivot frame 60 as shown in Garcia et al. FIG. 16. In response, the Applicants respectfully submit that Garcia et al. FIG. 16 merely discloses pivot frame 60, one end of which is fixed to pin 62, allowing the pivot frame 60 to pivot, or rotate, about pin 62 over a surface of base 52. Since one end of the pivot frame 60 is fixed by pin 62, it is impossible for the pivot frame 60 to slide along a groove.

Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that Garcia et al. FIG. 16 fails to teach a clamp bar which is slid along a slide groove disposed on the base, as set forth in independent claim 1, as amended herein.

While Scholten et al. was combined with Garcia et al. to reject dependent claims 7-9, as can be seen in Scholten et al. FIG. 6, this document cannot make up for the deficiencies of Garcia et al. to reject independent claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Garcia et al. and Scholten et al., at least for the reasons explained above.

Therefore, independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 7, 8, 11, and 12 are amended to place them in better form.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

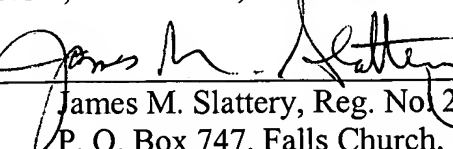
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants respectfully petition for a three (3) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application and the required fee is being filed concurrently herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

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Attachment: Two (2) Sheets of Revised Formal Drawings (FIGS. 2, 11, 12(a) and 12(b))

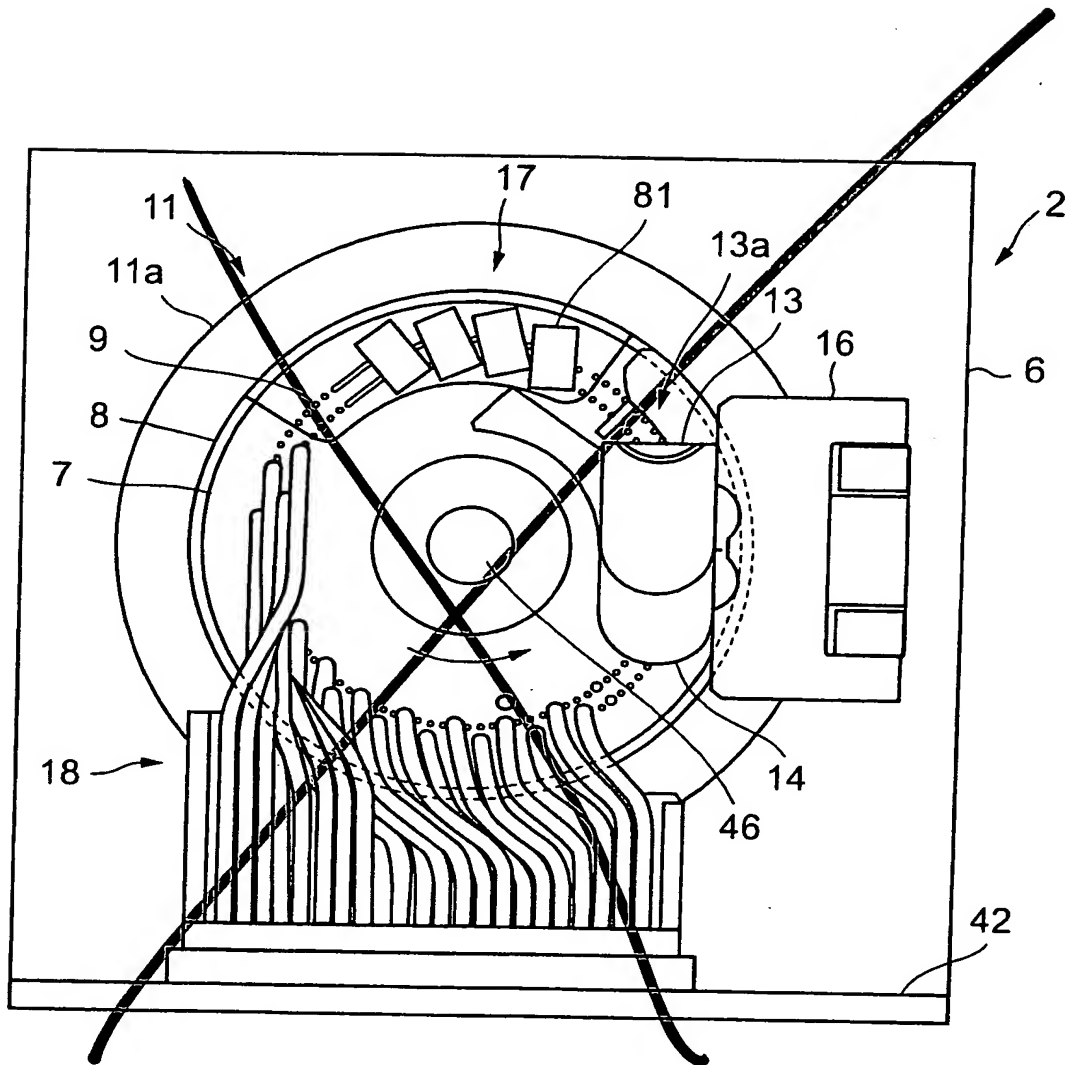


FIG. 2

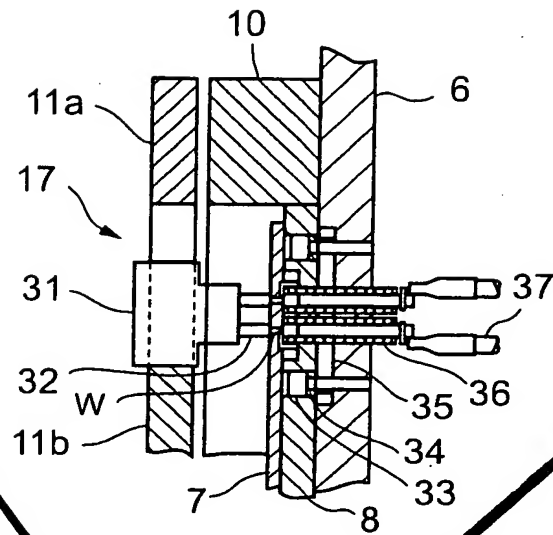
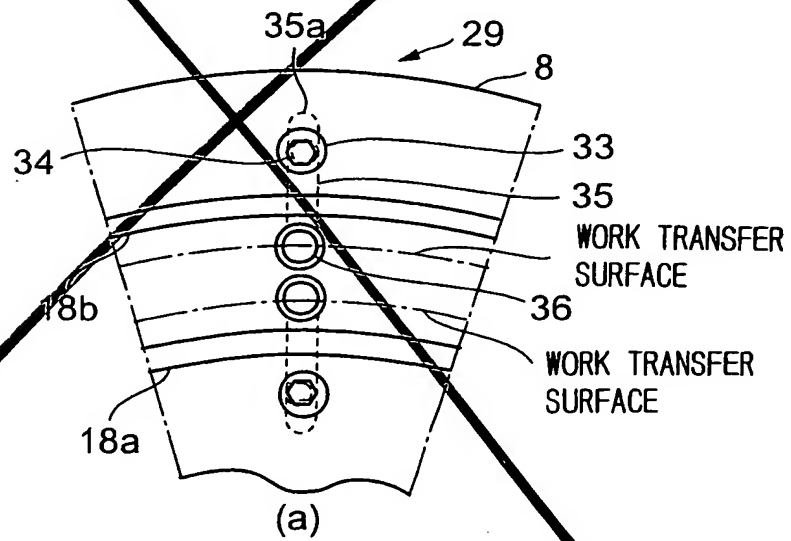
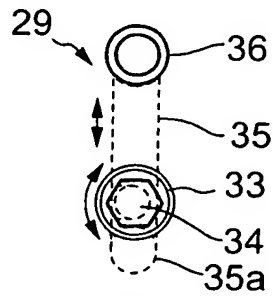


FIG. 11



(a)



(b)

FIG. 12